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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/510,519	10/06/2004	Christophe Girolid	034299-000605	8870

7590 05/31/2007
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EXAMINER

HALPERN, MARK

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1731

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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05/31/2007

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/510,519

Applicant(s)

GIROLD ET AL.

Examiner

Mark Halpern

Art Unit

1731

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 May 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6 and 11-14 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6 and 11-14 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 10/6/04.
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1) Applicant's election without traverse of invention I, drawn on claims 1-6, in the reply filed on 5/16/2007, is acknowledged.

Claims 1-5 are amended, claims 7-10 are cancelled and new claims 11-14 are offered for consideration.

Information Disclosure Statement

2) The listing of references in the specification is not a proper information disclosure statement. 37 CFR 1.98(b) requires a list of all patents, publications, or other information submitted for consideration by the Office, and MPEP § 609.04(a) states, "the list may not be incorporated into the specification but must be submitted in a separate paper." Therefore, unless the references have been cited by the examiner on form PTO-892, they have not been considered.

References recited in the Specification [0008], [0015] are to be listed on form PTO-1449 and copies of the foreign references submitted for verification.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3) Claims 1, 3-6, 11-14, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gotovchikov (5,750,822), with or without FR 96 09382.

Claim 1: Gotovchikov discloses a vitrification furnace 10 that includes a crucible 26 and heating means, the heating means including at least one plasma torch 18 in an upper portion of the crucible (col. 4, lines 30-35), and at least one induction coil 34 located outside said crucible (col. 5, lines 6-29)(col. 4 line 13 to col. 5, line 51 and Figures 1-5). Gotovchikov does not disclose that the induction coil 34 is located under the crucible, however, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made, that the location of the induction coil could be located under the crucible, since the induction coil of Gotovchikov performs the same function as that of the induction coil of the present invention. If need be, FR 96 09382, as self admitted in [0015] of the present Specification, discloses induction coil location under the crucible. It would have been obvious to combine the teachings of Gotovchikov and FR 96 09382, because such a combination would improve the quality of vitrification in the crucible of Gotovchikov.

Claims 3-6: plasma torch assembly includes more than one torch. The torch settings are disclosed.

Claims 11-14 recite method limitations that do not structurally differentiate the apparatus claims over the cited prior art.

4) Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gotovchikov with or without FR 96 09382, in view of Boen (WO 98/05185). The

Art Unit: 1731

crucible plate and a shell upright structure is well known in the art, as for example, shown by Boen in Figure 1.

Conclusion

5) Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Mark Halpern whose telephone number is 571-272-1190.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Steven Griffin can be reached on 571-272-1189. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Mark Halpern/
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1731